

FOLKIES

Editorial

Peggy Brown

There's an ice chandelier hanging off the trellis outside my study near where a brown squirrel has been digging through the ice for acorns. In the morning quiet Oscar Wilde's Lady Bracknell has challenged Penelope on the earnestness of weaving. Ray Bradbury's Peter has just invited King Lear into the Veldt, and Sancho Panza recently reached mid-life and has challenged Stephen King to a duel. Lady Macbeth sits next to a grey-haired woman on the plane my character is taking to Madrid. In my habit of reading several books simultaneously, I find the characters encounter each other and begin an independent life of their own on my page.

Such is the nature of characters. Once someone gives them life, they cannot die. Protean, they take on new shapes in readers' imaginations and mate with residents there, creating Molly Blooms, Stephen Dedaluses.

So what does this mean to you, dear reader, who have kindly purchased (or are standing in the CCCC Bookstore reading) a copy of *Forces*.

First, it means that you, in reading these works, may allow the characters, their ideas, to enter your mind. Beware! Once they move in, they check out the other residents there and strike up acquaintances. Strange events may occur: marriages, births, natural deaths, dangerous liaisons, duels, arguments, riots, or epic journeys. You become the artist of the new heroes, willing or not, and become an accomplice to the marriage of my characters and yours in the vital recesses of your imagination.

You become an artist. Don't deny it. Remember when you drew stars on your bedroom wall to practice making them and then, faced with the prospect of your mother finding them, discovered they were permanently affixed and to scrub them only smeared the blue crayola to a blur that became glaringly visible? You sat trembling when she walked in the room. Only when she did not recognize your penchant for emulating Monet did your creative act loom deadly. Or what of the picture of a magnificent purple horse that you drew in first grade only to have your teacher rave about Anthony's BROWN one? How many horses did you draw after that, hum? Admit it. Most of us want to be artists, whether we make use of our star-driven talent or not. We simply want to design the Christmas card that makes everyone remark, "That was the neatest Christmas card—did you have someone design it for you?" Or in Pictionary, to draw the quick sketch that not only wins the point but gets passed around to the other players who shrink in admiration.

No. Artists make us feel inferior. Yet, I want to explore the possibility that an artist lives in all of us, but, like

characters, he/she lurks in the soundproof room of our imagination.

So, how do we bring her/him to the surface? To start, I'm sure that all of you have heard that artists are decadent. Our first step, then, will be to become decadent. Not irreversibly decadent, only mildly decadent. As a start, go to the nearest mall that has a Chocolate Chip Cookie Factory and ask for one of their bran muffins—a justifiable corruption due to its fiber content—and a cup of coffee WITH CREAM. Do try cream in your coffee just this once. All artists know they must take risks, break routines, try new things—to explore their sensitivities. Next, sit at the table with the umbrella (that one, there, next to the palm) that overlooks the fountain. Dump the container of half and half into your coffee and watch the cream collide with the black coffee in energetic swirls that rise and fall in kinetic shapes. Don't hurry the process. Watch to see how long it takes for the movement to slow—you'll probably stir before the swirling completely stops—I did. Now, before you begin to read, break pieces from the bran muffin and let the alluring texture seduce your senses as you wash it down with your first cautious sip of coffee. Don't pick up the journal until you have indulged your craving for the sweet, nutty bites that please the connoisseur you have become. Listen to the sounds of the fountains as droplets charge the air with energy before they fall to merge with the billions others before swirling to fly again in their free dance above the common waters below. Such is your imaginative flight if you allow the dance.

Now dance with your new friends in *Forces*.

Cover: Kay Jacobs created the artwork for the cover. She is a student in advertising art.



Photograph by Janice Hirmon



Photograph by Elta Chandler

Title: No Girls Allowed

FORCES

Universal Forces

1	Untitled	Photograph by Janice Hirmon
2	No Girls Allowed	Photograph by Elta Chandler
4	Women	Peter Williams
4	Pottery by Jane Hurst	Photographed by Holly K. Powell
6	Touched	Peter Williams
7	A Summer Dream Come True	Jackie Webb
8	Untitled	Photograph by Gina Hill
9	Madonna & Child	Drawing by Julio Suarez
10	Shhh!	Scott Dwight Huffmaster
11	Afraid	Ron Jackson
12	The Meeting	Laura Sue Lindsey
14	Untitled	Illustration by Robert Hemer

Dynamic Forces

16	Ascension	Sculpture by Steve Daniel
17	Schlock Value	Michael Udel
19	Identity Thoughts	Ari Newcomb
20	Untitled	Pottery by Dena Monsees
21	Race For Life	Ron Jackson
22	Arm Chair	Illustration by Sandy Freeman
23	Interview: David O. Cullen	Nick Ryan and Linda Gillispie
26	Daisies	Scott Huffmaster

Imaginary Forces

28	Mobil Horse	Steve Tucker
29	Tweezer	Dow Peterson
30	Earth Day, 1996	Illustration by Jim Roberson
33	Substance of Life	Print by Wendy Cramer
36	The Kiss	Drawing by Jennifer McKinney
37	Sweetness and Light	Linda Pinkham
38	All We Need Is Love	Peter Williams

Pivotal Forces

40	Two Dollars	Michael Udel
40	Untitled	Sculpture by Jim Roberson
41	On Voices of Dissent	Kay Mizell
43	Untitled	Photograph by Janice Honea
44	Untitled	Photograph by Janice Hirmon

Forces Staff

Editor:	Linda K. Gillispie	Editorial Staff:	Laurie S. Allen	Jason Stoffregen
Associate Editor:	Jackie Webb		Nicole Brinkman	Karen Fritschi
Assistant Editor:	Nick Ryan		Nancy Clampitte	Glen Gregory
Faculty Advisor:	Peggy Brown		Scott D. Huffmaster	
Layout / Design:	Don Killen		Brad Robertson	

Women

Peter Williams

I search through the
 rose bushes
When what I really want
 is a sunflower.

But nothing so common
 as a Dandelion.



Pottery by Jane Hurst

Photographed by Holly K. Powell

FORCES

FORCES

UNIVERSAL

UNIVERSAL

Touched

Peter Williams

Touched. She reaches down through me and touches bottom. She fills the hole completely but does not touch the sides. Only bottom. Only her. She wanted to know, "Why her?" Who knows the answer? I do. Love is a rainbow. Many different parts, many different colors; all beautiful. Some more beautiful than others. But what makes one color more attractive than another? Only one can reflect the light through my eyes and into my heart. Only her.



A Summer Dream Come True

Jackie Webb

The languid summer days of '75 began earlier than usual, around May. I waited with tense anticipation for the end of June to arrive. I had received acceptance in January on scholarship to the Summer Research Institute of Oceanology. As the days approached, my excitement heightened.

Although a summer of intense research and study of ocean organisms would appear to some as tedious and dreary, I eagerly awaited the trip to Newport. I imagined myself traipsing around the rocky shores of New England in search of tidepools in the crevices, sailing the Narragansett Bay to drop plankton tows, exploring the inlets and harbors of Connecticut and Massachusetts, mapping out sand dunes and being showered by the salt spray of the waves slapping the shoreline. It was a near perfect dream about to come true, depositing images in my mind of an august summer with work that I loved, in a place I revered. Except for the "Dear Jane" letter I had received from my estranged boyfriend, I was in sublime reverie.

I had spent the entire school year preparing myself mentally for a scientific expedition in the summer. Academically, I was equipped for the challenge ahead. Emotionally, I was not quite as prepared. I was a high school teenager who was categorized as a "brain." I did have a social life, though nothing spectacular. I befriended others easily and had, for four years, become very close to one particular young man. We had this on-and-off-again relationship, typical of teenagers, I suppose. It was different for me, I thought. I knew that one day I would marry him. He was "the one."

During my junior year of high school, he and I had been "off" in our relationship most of the year. He had broken up with me not long after the school year had begun. So what, I reasoned. I would just "leave him alone, and he would come home..." I corresponded with him from time to time, but usually with no response. I did the logical thing to take my mind off him. I threw myself into my studies.

The year was packed with challenges. I was in top academic honors courses. My favorite, marine biology, was the epitome of learning experiences. My love for research, my ardent passion for the ocean and all it contained, and my drive to achieve resulted in my applying for, and winning, a scholarship to one of the most prestigious summer study programs in oceanology—and in New England. I could not have been happier.

A letter arrived from my distant beau in early June. It was the kind of letter with news of mundane family life you might expect from a cousin, not your true love. Then,

there it was—the last paragraph, almost like an afterthought:

Oh, I have to tell you. I'm getting married June 29 at my church. Big step for me! I'll pray for you for your life ahead. That's all for now.

Well, that did it. Good-bye. Have a nice life. I am not the overtly emotional type—no sobs, no tears, just a resignation to get on with things. I decided I did not need the interruption of a relationship in my life anyhow. If he was the one, he was gone now. With an almost secret hope in my heart, I kept the letter.

Upon arrival in Providence, I was picked up by bus and driven to the school in Newport. New England was as beautiful as I had remembered in my childhood: rolling lush green hills along the rocky shores. St. George's School protruded through dense green trees and profuse foliage on the ascent of a hill accessed by the winding coastal road. The stately Gothic architecture of the school cathedral and well-trimmed lawns looked like the brochure of an ivy-league college. This would be home for the summer.

The research program began the following day after all 21 students had checked into their dormitories. Each of us was assigned, in groups of threes, to an advisor in our field of interest. I was assigned to zoological oceanography, my first choice of study. Within the first week of classes, labs, lectures and field work, my peers and I had chosen our research topics and were devising various schemes and plans for experimentation.

My days were filled with trips around Narragansett Bay on the school boat, the *Puffin*, to drop a tow line and plankton bucket, hiking the rocky shores to outline and study tidal pools, and wading along the shore of the Second Beach with temperature and salinity test kits. My research also involved long nights in the lab counting copepods, which had been caught in the daily plankton run, as they migrated vertically in a cylindrical beaker.

I kept the "Dear Jane" letter with me. I would pull it out and read it when some melancholy moment struck me. In July, I finally realized he was truly gone, married by then.

On a quiet Sunday afternoon, two weeks before school was to end, I was lounging around the visiting room awaiting my weekly telephone call from my parents. I answered the phone on the first ring with a voice betraying my homesick heart. My mother's news for the week consisted of trivial details about my siblings, her errands, and the mail. Almost as if she had forgotten, she

informed me that she had sent a care package to me that included a typewritten letter, addressed to me, but with no return address. She said she had opened it "just to see who it was from." It was from him—my true love—another letter! My heart was leaping within me. Mom said she thought she mailed the package the prior Thursday, so it should arrive early in the week.

My interest in my oceanology classes waned daily. I watched time ebb on the clock. My research was ready to be compiled into written form, and, try as I might, I could scarcely get a word written on the page. I lived for mail call—and that letter.

Wednesday's mail brought the long-awaited note. My dormmates gathered around as I breathlessly read his typed words:

I am writing in reference to my last letter. I had joined the Army and somehow my orders came through for me to report on the day I was supposed to get married. I reported and was processed and when I got back, my girlfriend and I broke up. She went to another guy. I just hope you have a good life and my prayers are with you. Tell your family I said hello. I'll be leaving for boot camp in September. Good-bye.

I was ecstatic. This was my chance. He could still be mine. I wrote a long, thoughtful, non-condemning letter during my geological oceanography class the next day. I told him my research would be completed in August, and I would be returning home. I mentioned the date and time of my flight just in case he might want to greet me.

The last three days of school were frenzied, trying to prepare final papers and oral presentations. I made it through my lecture with the ease of a first-place-speech-meet veteran. The following day, with suitcases, memorabilia and souvenirs packed, my classmates and I pledged our love to one another and bid our good-byes.

The Rhode Island shoreline faded away, smaller and smaller, until it finally disappeared in my airplane window. The return flight home seemed an eternity with long reflections on the days that had just preceded. With mounting anticipation, I prepared for my flight to land.

My family was waiting inside the gate, eager for my return. I flew to their arms, thrilled to be home and among my loved ones. As I picked up my shoulder bag to leave, he stepped around the corner and stopped in front of me. There he stood—my true love. I melted into his arms. It was my summer dream come true.



Photograph by Gina Hill



Drawing by Julio Suarez

Madonna & Child

Shhh!

Scott Dwight Huffmaster

MINDS

RAMBLE,

WORDS

SCRAMBLE,

THOUGHTS

CORRODE,

EMOTIONS

FOLD,

DELETING SENSES...

VISIONS
AND

WHISPERS
AND

SCREAMS
AND

SILENCE
AND

SMELLS
AND

SOUNDS
AND

TASTES
AND

IT'S QUIET NOW...

Every woman who has reared a little boy can relate to this poem. I'm not sure that little girls are afflicted with the same fears as boys, but I know, from my own experience and that of my own two sons, that boys usually call to "Mom" when they're afraid. I think that certain maternal bond must last from the womb to the grave. I wrote the following to my mother, as a Christmas present, to assure her of her never ending importance in my life.

A small boy lies in bed at night
With darkness all around,
And strains his eyes to see the shape
Of whatever made the sound
That woke him up, from restful sleep,
And filled his heart with fear
His breaths come short, his eyes are wide,
And in them stands a tear.

His quivering lips are covered now
By the sheet pulled over his head,
And they form a word that he can use
In any time of dread
"Mother" comes the magic sound,
"Mother, I'm afraid".....
And then he hears her voice so sweet
In the darkness where he's laid....
"Go back to sleep, my little man,
There's nothing you should fear.
I'm right here close beside you now
No bad things can come near."

The tear is gone, his eyes are closed,
A soft hand strokes his arm
He drifts into the land of dreams
And knows he'll face no harm.

As minutes quickly turn to hours
And days turn into years,
A small, frail child becomes a man
And casts away all fears.
But sometimes, many miles away,
In darkness where he's laid
He quietly whispers, through the sheet,
"Mother, I'm afraid."

The Meeting

Laura Sue Lindsey

It is late. The dark streets are wet and the freezing drizzle mists the shoulders of well-dressed men looking about for their cars. A woman comes through the Hall's doors. In her black wool wrap, she looks quite white; she is very straight and tall, but this is merely an illusion of pump heels and breeding. She remains motionless, letting a flood of people pass her on the stairs until only the last trickle chatting in the light keep her from being left entirely behind. Several of the men have glanced at her in passing, she is a handsome woman without an escort in such weather, but their solicitude is returned by a cold and empty smile, a professional dimple and elegant fidget with her glove. Her gaze continues to hold its place on the drive in front of the building.

"It's a cold night to be standing outside. Can we give you a lift somewhere?" The man is young and proud of his wife whose hand he has tucked in the crook of his arm. They have the look of committee volunteers; the exhausted relief of people who "pull it off." She notices the wife pinching him hard through his coat, and has no doubt he will soon regret inviting a strange woman to get into their car.

"I'm waiting for someone. Thank you." She brushes off the moisture collecting on her coat and gives her gloves a final tug before descending the stairs. In the parking lot, discarded programs scatter as icy gusts of wind blow down the empty streets.

She is alone and surrounded by the sounds of a sleeping city; the far-off clanging of metal, the swish of steam rising from dark factories, even the neon signs have a humming noise only heard this time of night. With an anxious and hurried look, she searches the entrances of dark alleys, pulling her light jacket up around her ears and pushing her hand deep into her pocket. A drunk in a truck honks and hangs his head out the window to yell out unintelligible babble. She would be frightened, but the realization that she has found the right alley pushes thoughts of danger out of her way.

She had been late and the parking lot full. In the powder pink safety of dusk, she'd concentrated more concern on the condition of her shoes from the long walk than remembering her choice of parking locations. The entire night became a disaster as soon as the concert had started and she was forced into a seat without having found her companions for the evening. Somehow they had managed to leave without her as well. Then standing on the stairs like that. Her heels tap a rapid staccato remembering the humiliation.

She stands under the last bit of light and searches her purse for keys. The "clink" when she drops them on the

cement causes her to pause, listening as if the sound might have attracted "some person." A rustle of papers and movement a few yards ahead confirms the idea. She grabs the keys and begins to back out of the alley, determined to find a policeman to escort her back to her car. The stupidity of her position becomes obscenely clear when she hears a cough coming from the alley.

"Don't worry lady. I'm just sleeping here. That must be your car down there, right?"

The voice rises from beneath a pile of newspapers. The man himself looks as if he might be another bundle of trash blown into the doorway. He is white, that much she can make out, and old; his beard spreads like dirty paste down his shirt front. He struggles to get up and she watches him hop down the side of the building pressing his hand against the wall for support. One of his legs drags behind and the ankle is twisted.

"Stop there," she orders, "I'm going to go get a policeman to walk me to my car. You better leave before I get back." She spins around and attempts to run, but her heels bend under and jam in the crack of sidewalk.

"Don't do that lady. I'm not hurting anyone. See?" He raises his hands. The lady is having trouble with her shoes and he stands there with his hands in the air while she pulls one shoe out of the sidewalk and the other off her foot. "They'll run me into a shelter." He can see she is thinking things over. "I heard that drunk out there. Maybe he's looking for you. This is a bad part of town...I was kind of watching your car, too."

"I just bet you were."

"I was. That's a real nice car and I was going to scare anybody off if they tried to steal it." He hadn't really thought of that, but the words seemed to be calming her down. If she told the police he was out here they'd find him, and he was in no mood to sleep on the floor with a bunch of kids and dirty winos again. His own stench was bad enough.

"Oh, alright, but keep your hands up."

As she came close, he could see her skin was white as paper and her legs were just little bony creaky things without those tall shoes on. She was clutching the shoes and her purse against her ribs and walking in her stockings. He couldn't figure the knuckle-headedness of some people. If those earrings were real, they could keep someone like him off the street for months; an amount worth more than the price of a life to some. She passed in front of him and he thought, that was that; but then she

turned back around and started to say something. Her face is very beautiful, he thought, but she should eat more. It's a crazy world with these rich people starving themselves like that.

"Here."

The lady's arm reached out from her body and he felt confused, not knowing what she wanted him to do. He shuffled along the wall until they were face to face. Her odor of perfume and soap was strong. Careful not to touch his fingers, she held out some money by a corner and he pulled free two five dollar bills. He never looked at her face again, just the money, money from heaven.

"Thanks lady, I can really use this," he spoke into his shoes, "but try to stay out of these alleys from now on. There's some pretty bad folks down some of these places." He was relieved to hear the car door close behind her and the engine start.

The ten dollars wanted spending and he thought he'd try the late night diner down on Kentucky. Maybe if they saw the money first, that he was there for more than coffee, they'd let him in. The neon coffee cup in the window could be seen flashing two blocks away and he cursed his useless leg, thinking about the hot bowl of chili he was set on ordering.

Just before he opened the door, he felt the wind freeze hard against his chin and laughed, rubbing the bills inside his pocket. The force of his good mood caused his empty stomach to cramp and growl. Through the glass, he could see people inside begin to look up from their eggs and papers. "That sure was a nice lady," he thought. "I should have asked her to join me. You know Sam, sometimes you've got the manners of a damn dog." He opened the door and stood in the heat and stared at the bright lights of the diner. The chili smelled good tonight.

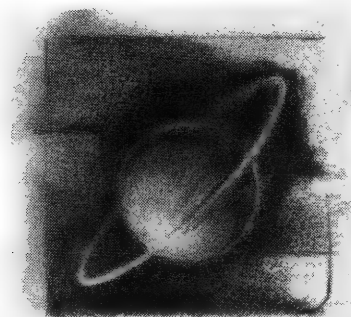




Illustration by Robert Hemer

FORCES

FORCES

DYNAMIC

DYNAMIC



Ascension

Sculpture by Steve Daniel

Horror films may be the most abused offspring from the dysfunctional cinematic family. While the one necessary element of a horror film is obvious, your local video store (read Schlockbuster) will place anything with a chainsaw, a quart of chicken's blood, and a giant mutated rat in the horror category. The difference between a horror movie and a horrible movie is not only a matter of semantics but one of taste as well. Hollywood peddles the shock value of its gory special effects like crutches at a onelegged log rolling contest. No matter how trendy the spectacle may seem to its producers, for its viewers the experience is something less than spectacular.

The modern definition of the horror genre created by fashionable slasher flick icons like Jason, Freddy, Michael, and Chucky pays only superficial homage to its ancestors, who made the formula of "monster-as-antagonist attacks helpless female victim" a classic. Current horror films still subscribe to the time-proven plot of evil vs. innocent victim, but they add a contemporary wrinkle, reflecting society's emphasis on sensationalism. While there is nothing sensational in a story of a monster from beyond because we do not believe in U.F.O.s, Lock Ness Monsters, Yettis, or Sasquatches, there is something intriguing in a story of a man whose dog orders him to strangle ten women.

Upon hearing such a story of senseless murder, we react the same way as we do to any episode of Friday the Umpteenth. First, we sympathize with the helpless victim. We try to imagine the horror of being ruthlessly disemboweled by a psychotic maniac. And just as your TV news reporter will assist your imagination in creating a vivid picture with melodramatic crime scene photography, your horror film director will pump your movie screen as full of blood, gore, and fantastic mad men as his budget will allow. Next, when we watch the busty blonde in the negligee as she opens the closet door that will release her doom, we feel the abstract fear of driving past a mangled car surrounded by paramedics struggling to free its driver from the wreckage. We slow down to witness the ghastly scene and realize it could just as easily have been us. Third, we are exhilarated by our proximity to death. Hollywood and our media agree that more is better, quantity over quality, so it is no surprise we are most exhilarated by the greatest body count. If only five teenagers became Freddy fodder last time around, then ten must now be sacrificed to the great god of gore, or at least they should be slaughtered in new and creative fashion. Even today's jaded horror buffs appreciate an inventive decapitation. Audiences thrill to the cleverness of the latest mechanism of death like the Marquis de Sade fingering his newest leather whip.

Speaking of sadism and gratuitous one-upmanship, for

the true horror junky there are two remarkable "grossout" films available. Bloodsucking Freaks is the perfect example of a movie trying to outdo everything imaginable in order to disgust its audience. Despite being repulsive, the film is also ironic in its plot of a live stage featuring its actors as torture victims. We know the show is real, but the audience does not. The director has abducted some well endowed young ladies and is torturing, then executing, them on stage. The catch for us is that when we laugh at the snobby theater patrons who applaud the vile performance, we are laughing at ourselves, who ghoulishly enjoy the on-screen agony.

Another gruesome film recommended only for the hardcore viewer is Make Them Die Slowly. Delivering exactly what it promises, the movie depicts three scientists traveling to South America on an expedition to support the hypothesis that cannibalism is extinct. The scientists encounter two men in the jungle who have killed a member of an Indian tribe. To the scientists' dismay, the tribe is cannibalistic, and all but one of the five whites are cruelly tortured and killed, then eaten.

The movie is unnerving because some graphic footage of a leopard killing and eating a wildly resisting chimpanzee is mixed into the film. The director's editing technique gives the decapitation, cannibalism, and torture scenes of Make Them Die Slowly a rare authenticity reminiscent of the better Faces of Death sequences. When combined with the excellent special effects of the human slayings, the actual animal deaths imbue the movie with an all-too-realistic flavor of morbidity not even approached by another entry into the horror classification, with the possible exception of Henry: Portrait of a Serial Killer.

Both films succeed in disgusting their audience, but only one of them creates even shortlived fear. Although Make Them Die Slowly deserves credit as a truly frightening movie, it achieves fear at the expense of whatever its viewer may have been trying to digest prior to the viewing. While the previous examples attempt to shock their audiences by any means available, much better films exist that succeed in scaring their audience through respectable means.

Browning's Freaks was considered so frightening that it was banned in Great Britain for thirty years. Where most current directors stock their films with mute, barbaric, unfeeling grotesqueries of humanity, Browning cast Freaks with a troop of circus performers who may appear to be less than human because of their misshapen bodies but are actually just the opposite. Freaks reverses the traditional roles of monster and victim and endears a band of visually disturbing characters to its audience, while making the most attractive person in the film the villain.

The audience is horrified when the most popular and gentle member of the close-knit family of sideshow freaks is duped by the lovely trapeze artist. The fear inspired by the freak's response to the attempted poisoning of their leader is genuine and shocking.

In 1932, Browning created a film of lasting quality and consummate horror, without relying on flashy special effects mutilations. Browning's movie depends on an intense climax and a believable plot to create the kind of horror film rarely enjoyed and seldom surpassed.

In the case of horror films, life does not imitate art. Any novice history student can recite a litany of atrocities committed by man against man. Despite the increasing sophistication of Hollywood's special effects artists, not even her most ambitious directors can equal 'the horror' of man's darkest heart.

A horror film entertains its audience with a story that moves us to the edge of our seats. A horrible film moves only our stomachs by using gratuitous dismemberment and voiceless psychopaths to imitate society's serial killers. Why go to the theater for that when you can stay home and watch the eleven o'clock news?



Identity Thoughts

Ari Newcomb

Am I the most deluded character of my family, or the most sane? Or just a happy amalgam? Yes, that is possible. Ah, I have it. I'm not relative, I'm me, and should be taken as such. I guess that's the one I was looking for. If I weren't so frantic to compare and contrast, I'd remember this. Is it only relation that gives us meaning, I wonder as people have, but I also wonder in my room late at night when everyone else has retired, with my pen, paper, and whimsy all hanging out together and into it, if this moment is a pure drop of unadulterated identity. Did Descartes have an actual nibble rather than a grandiose bite when he talked of "I"? Or did heredity decide my innards long ago, skipping across time and forming new-added permutations with each conception? I'm mulatto. Most people are afraid to be, or else "they'd be just a sponge soaking up all points of view from the crossfire of MIDDLEGROUND." A weakling observer whose identity is everyone's. I know that is what I'm not, but I'll admit to being influenced within reason since I know that the things I'm drawn to are particular and add up to something. Something to consider?



Pottery by Dena Monsees

20 FORCES Spring 1993

Race For Life

Ron Jackson

More silently than God can form a droplet of dew upon nature's carpet of grass, she steals from her sanctuary of forest cover to the exposure of the meadow. Driven by the soft twinges in her stomach, the oft-reported, ritualistic quest for nourishment is foremost in her mind.

Slowly and cautiously she moves, but her ordinarily nimble and featherlight footsteps feel clumsy and seem to echo in her ears like spring thunder. As the gentle summer breeze bathes her world in its fresh warmth and erases the wispy, leftover clouds of the day, she silently wonders, "Why do I have these feelings?" and "Why should this night seem so strange?" I come here often to gather the wild berries and drink the cool water of the springs, but never have they tasted so sweet as tonight.

In her feverish attempt to quench the gnawing pains of hunger, she eats and drinks far more than the norm...as if her body was crying for extra nourishment to complete some unknown, not yet run, race for life. Now, the lank feeling of hunger is replaced by the uncomfortable feelings of overindulgence that can only be cured by relaxation and the passage of time.

As she lies down on the soft, warm earth, painted silvergray by a crescent moon and uncountable stars, she notices the faint flickers of lightning. It seems to be in a far-away land, where the evening sun falls from the heavens each day. In the stillness, the great horned owl, circling above, causes his shadow to sweep silently across the grass-tops, like the razor-edged scythe of the reaper. Only in this solitude does she notice that the pain does not abate but is more intense.

Suddenly she remembers that today's meal included not only the tender young shoots of several pokesallet plants, but also six or seven of the luscious, green may apples that grow so well in the low spots near the river. Taught by her mother that both plants can be toxic at certain stages of their development, she wonders if, in her haste for nourishment, she might have gotten careless and overlooked one of her lessons of survival.

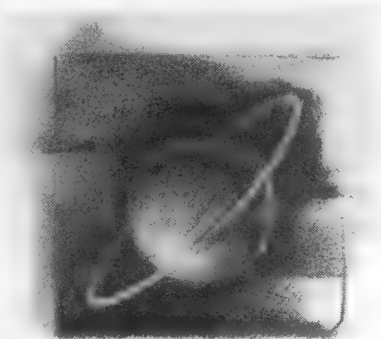
As the pain becomes more and more severe, she begins to balance on the edge of consciousness, and knowing the harshness of this largely unsettled wilderness, she battles with every fiber of her being to remain lucid and alert. The simple act of breathing is now transformed into what seems to be a laborious task. Her mind tells her body to relax, exhale the air in her lungs, and don't expend the effort to refill them. It would be so easy, just to drift off into the oblivion of the hereafter...

Keeping the senses sharp is becoming more and more of an effort, and she knows that the loss of this battle in which

she's now engaged would probably be her last upon this earth. The conscious mind can only withstand so much and then a being's existence is passed to the hemisphere of the brain that controls the last fortress of defense...the subconscious. As her mind passes through this portal and back, time after time, she finds it more and more difficult to separate fact from fantasy. Is this what it feels like to die? Should there be this unbearable pain? The old ones had always said that dying is a wonderful trip to a land far away, but this is far from being a beautiful transition. Her pain is now so intense that her mind begins to beg for the peace and tranquility that death will surely bring.

Just as the sun rules the day and the moon governs the night, an all-seeing, omnipotent God allows no creature to suffer beyond its limitations of endurance. No exception is made in this case, and as the long painful night begins to give way to the first silver light of daybreak, she quietly slips into the waiting arms of a dreamlike world. A dream of a meadow, freshened by the morning dew...a meadow with long, cool shadows, created by the first rays of a newly risen sun...a meadow soft with the sweet smell of summer flowers and the songs of waking birds...a meadow which, in its enormity, still embraces the small, spotted creature with huge ears, bulbous brown eyes and a wet nose, lying beside its mother.

In a short time, when she's standing and the small newcomer is nursing at her side, she will suddenly realize that life and death are only separated by a hair's breadth, and that all creatures are born to die. This day has been kind, and rather than leave the world, she has brought it new life. It is a good day.





Arm Chair

Illustration by Sandy Freeman

An Interview with David O'Donald Cullen

Nick Ryan and Linda Gillispie

Take a two-year-old child, spend fifteen years exposing him to the life and culture of such countries as Egypt...Greece...Italy...Spain...Canada...Mexico...Peru...Panama...Ireland, homeland of his grandparents... Add in Washington, D.C. and many states in the U.S. Mix in a love of reading and music and what have you got? David O'Donald Cullen, teacher of history here at CCCC and part-time DJ on the alternative music radio station, KERA.

In a personal interview, David shares his insights about America. where we've been—and where we're heading—the threads that bind our country together and set us apart from other countries. And it's all from the interesting perspective of one who has spent nearly half of his lifetime abroad....

Forces: What motivated you to be a teacher of history?

David: In my youth, I was always involved in sports. That's almost all I did. Other people were interested in cars and girls, but I played football, basketball, track, swimming and soccer in high school. And that takes a lot of time. Even though I did poorly in my high school classes (I was a terrible student), I read when I wasn't playing sports. The reading began partly because I spent so much time overseas where there was often no TV or radio. Reading was our entertainment and our leisure—I always loved reading. I was interested in trying to understand why we [as a people] are in the position we are in: what factors have led to that condition, and was it inevitable?

Then I went to college, where I tried out for football. But I hurt my knee and was out—I still didn't do well in classes that first year. I wasn't prepared, and I didn't know what I wanted to do. Then I took a history course taught by a graduate student who was young and had been involved in the Chicano movement and with Students for a Democratic Society. He introduced me to a historian, William Appleman Williams, and his radical interpretation of American history. He was one of the first historians to look at history from the "bottom up," reporting history from the point of view of the working class, from the point of view of a slave or an immigrant and what their lives were like. He pointed out the economic factors that influenced political decisions and

the social and cultural factors that influenced how society grows. I became fascinated with all of that.

Until then, I had never read with a purpose. But much of what Williams said reinforced other works I read. I read George Orwell probably when I was too young to understand. I also read Henry Miller who approached life by continuously re-creating himself. I liked that. I read Germain Greer and Norman Mailer about the same time I was reading this historian. It occurred to me that approaches to life varied. I recalled my grandpa saying, "Only you can be the hero of

"Only you can be the hero of your life."

your life." All this reinforced what I wanted to do and what I wanted to accomplish and how I wanted to live.

Forces: Do you think there are heroes for today?

David: I asked my students to name their heroes at one point. Out of more than 300 students, I had about 12 responses because most of them have no heroes. Of those 12, a couple were movie stars and one was an athlete. There were no politicians, authors, or notable cultural figures. Very few people touch their lives and allow them to imagine a better world. You have to have a moral imagination in order to create a better world, because if you can't imagine a better world, you never accomplish it.

Forces: Why do you think we have reached this point? and do you think our arrival was inevitable?

NOTE: When asked for a photograph of himself, David refused, saying, "I don't like my picture being where I'm not." Instead, he chose the illustration on page 22 created by Sandy Freeman.

David: We have a legacy of the sixties to overcome, it seems to me. With the death of Robert Kennedy and Martin Luther King in 1968, then the election of Richard Nixon and the corruption involving Watergate, we developed a great deal of cynicism. You see, it's all right to be critical, to be intellectually demanding. But to be cynical is to give up. To be critical is to demand a certain intellectual honesty among people, to hold them accountable. If you see a wrong, correct it. Cynicism, though, throws up its hands and says it's inevitable. We can't do anything about our problem, so we'll give up and bury our heads.

Forces: Do you think that's where we are now?

David: Yes. I think what we have now is a generation who trusts no one. I think they're alarmed that they may not be able to live the wonderful life their parents lived. They may not be able to afford the home and all the material possessions, and it angers them.

Forces: Do you see a problem with our society moving from one based on moral absolutes to moral relativism?

David: For some time, perhaps since the 1960s, we have moved toward moral relativism. But that doesn't mean you don't make important decisions. We have at times been hesitant to point our finger and say something is wrong. Instead we say certain conduct is okay for that person. Serious problems exist when we refuse to make moral decisions. Society has to have some consensus about what conduct will be acceptable or not acceptable in order for society to operate.

Forces: Can you give us an example?

David: A historian came back from Germany startled when he asked students in Germany about Adolf Hitler. Rather than saying Hitler was wrong or evil, they said he was a product of his time. If those times were to occur again, they believe we would probably have another Hitler, and that having another Hitler may not be so bad if the times demanded it. In my mind, those students reflect a dangerous acquiescence to conformity, a failure to make a moral decision.

Forces: Do you think there are the same kind of issues here in this country? and how advanced do you really think we are?

David: Technically America is advanced. Even in a city

like London, that is assumed to be like New York or Los Angeles, it takes forever to shower and shave because of the water pressure. Long distance phone calls can take hours to put through in other countries, and we get upset here if it takes more than twenty seconds. People here don't appreciate the material comforts we have.

Forces: How about culturally?

David: I don't know if we're as advanced as we like to think we are. Our technical advancement has been rapid in the last century and in terms of world history, that's a blink of the eye. It takes society much longer to adapt than that. A good example, and certainly a controversial one, is abortion. We have the ability to abort a fetus. The question is, do you want that or not as a society? We have the technology to keep someone alive longer than ever before. Should we? Now cultural questions involve cultural values and our technology forces us to deal with them. We suffer from what sociologists call a "cultural lag," an inability of society to keep pace with the speed of technological change.

Forces: How do we deal with the technology and its place in our society?

David: I'll get back to my pet phrase: You have to have a moral imagination. You have to have people who are leaders—not just politicians, but leaders in a variety of fields—people who envision a different and better world. I'm not sure we have enough of those people around. We each have a deep, individual responsibility in making our world.

Forces: Following that thought, do other countries see us as leaders?

David: Most of them have suffered because of our foreign policy. It's difficult to get that across to American students. If I walked into class and announced that the Foreign Department of India has just made a pronouncement, it would have no influence on anyone here. But because of our size, strength, and economic power, what we do can dramatically affect everyone else, especially small countries.

Forces: Does that affect how they view Americans as individuals?

David: The people may initially respond to Americans on that basis. It's natural to receive reactions overseas to American government and policy. Once you get beyond



that, you're treated with a little more respect. For the most part, foreign people are amused by Americans because we are so open. We say what is on our minds. We laugh out loud and joke constantly. So they're fascinated by us!

Forces: To be more specific, how are American women received?

David: In France, many of the educated individuals I encountered failed to comprehend the problem we have with sexuality. French women seem to have a different approach to sexuality. They're much more at ease about their sexual relationship with men. I'm not sure why. On the other hand, in some areas of the middle east, American women are perceived as whores. Because of the influence of the Muslim religion; they don't understand the make-up, the fashions, or the independent nature. They're troubled by it. A friend visited a conservative section of Tel Aviv and men spat at her, telling her to leave because she had on slacks and make-up. They just didn't accept such appearance.

Also, women are not as politically oriented overseas as American women. In France, the number of women who get involved in political affairs is very limited. American women's political interests confuse French women because most of them just aren't interested in politics. In the United States, of course, many women get involved. A French woman's goals appear to be different and so their demands are different.

In America, women have to deal with more violence against them than in Europe. A friend spent a year and a half in Paris, then came to New York for about six months. After a month in New York, she realized she missed going out at two a.m. to get a newspaper. Here she dared out because of the violence, and I don't understand that. There are random acts of violence here that do not take place in other countries.

Forces: In spite of such violence, our culture seems to have a lot to offer. Does our lifestyle attract individuals from other cultures?

David: It would depend on what those individuals want and what their goals are. We're more open than most countries. If the goal is economic security, then we certainly have a lot to offer. If immigrants come from Iraq seeking a more democratic society, America is a great place—although not the only great place. I think tolerance and interest make it possible to live anywhere.

Forces: Which is something you've had the opportunity to experience. Living as you have has given you the chance to develop another love of yours: music. How did your interest bring about the opportunity to work in radio?

David: All those years I was reading and not studying, I also listened to jazz. I really liked jazz, primarily from the mid 1950s and 60s. When I was a student at the University of North Texas I had a friend working at the school radio station. They needed someone to do a jazz show one night and he talked me into it. I didn't think I'd be any good at it, but I went and did it and enjoyed it.

*"I think
tolerance and
interest make it
possible to live
anywhere."*

Then a friend called and asked if I wanted a part-time shift at KERA in Dallas. Instead of doing jazz, the station decided on an eclectic format. Now we play folk music, we play blues, we play jazz and we play alternative rock. We play some traditional musicians from the 60s, but not their hits. We play the songs no one knows they did. I enjoy it because I approach it like I'm telling a story. A song about a lost love is followed by a love found. A political song is followed by another political song with a different slant. It's fun to do it that way.

Sometimes we play music created from slave songs, a percussion number followed by a big band number from the 40s, then a rock artist from the 60s. You can still hear that same percussion. You can hear the rhythm traced back to slave songs. Sometimes people get it and call to tell us what they think.

Forces: You're a history professor, a DJ, and you've lived all over the world and experienced many different cultures. Those are remarkable accomplishments for your 37 years. Where do you see yourself ten years from now?

David: Ideally, I will still be teaching. I will have completed at least one documentary. I would like to have a book of essays published and to have written at least one decent short story. I want to go back to Ireland one or two more times and play another five or six years of football and basketball—until my knees give out! I would like to meet at least five interesting people.

Daisies

Scott Huffmaster

WILTED DAISIES IN A FIELD OF DREAMS
VISIONS RISING FROM IN BETWEEN
HOPES OF FLOWERS YET TO BLOOM
LITTLE BY LITTLE THEY MEET THEIR DOOM.

SLITHERING
SLASHING
STIRRING
THE STREAM,

A DAISY'S LIFE IS NOT JUST A DREAM,
AND HARDER, AND HARDER, THEY ROW THE BOAT
AND STILL NOT ALL CAN STAY AFLOAT, AND ONE SLIPS OVER THE EDGE
AND HE, AND HE CAN'T SWIM!

SLITHERING
SLASHING
BLURRING
THE DREAM,

HE SINKS TO THE WEEDS THAT REST WITH THE EARTH,
AND COVERED WITH WATER HE WAITS, AND HE WAITS
THEN FROM NOWHERE COMES A VISION OF NOTHING
AND COVERED WITH WATER HE WAITS, AND HE WAITS

SLITHERING
SLASHING
ENDURING
THE STREAM.

FORCES

FORCES

IMAGINARY

IMAGINARY

Mobil Horse

Steve Tucker

Steed of fire.
Flashing red, brilliant.
Smoking in the heat of his exaltation.
Soaring on ignited wings, ever upward.
Challenging the sun, the sky, to stop him.
Clouds flee the thunder of his hoofs.
Scorning the sea, defying the land,
accepting destiny with a snort.
A creature of pride and majesty,
silently ruling his domain.



Tweezor Zwellbrog cursed to himself as he stepped out of his personal teleportation chamber. His webbed feet made loud, slapping noises as he tramped into his living quarters, echoing his anger.

Government, he thought, must be run by the retarded and the inept. When the Twazillane Bureau of Transportation voted to install the personal teleportation circuits throughout the Twazil system of worlds and do away with physical travel, they should have been smart enough to foresee population explosions and continually upgrade the system. That was not so; rush hour traffic on the circuits was getting worse every solar time period. Tweezor Zwellbrog fumed at the thought of having to dial the system access code six times. It was little consolation that the trip from his office on the third moon of the Twa home system to his personal quarters on the homeworld consumed less time than walking next door to his neighbor's—an inconvenience was an inconvenience.

His attention was drawn by a flashing light on the far side of his quarters, and his anger began to ebb. The blinking signal alerted him that incoming postal communications were being held for him; Tweezor's antennae quivered in delight as he headed for the postal communication teleportation console.

Tweezor entered his personal postal retrieval code and was nearly knocked to the floor as dozens of Twazil periodicals poured from the materialization chamber.

Rapidly Tweezor Zwellbrog sorted through the myriad postal goodies. He tossed aside the daily copy of the *Twazillane Gazette*, *Better Living Quarters* and *Agricultural Systems*, and *Popular Multidimensional Engineering*. He quickly put aside the copies of *Twa Today*, *Twazillane Geographic*, *Twazil Athletics Illustrated*, and *The Twazil Inquirer*; deeper, Tweezor Zwellbrog burrowed into the mound of periodicals.

Tweezor began to toss another periodical when he noticed the title. One quick peek at the centerfold in *Playtwazil* won't hold me up too long, he thought. He rapidly spread the pages open. His eyes focused on the staples in the female Twazil's waist. One independent eyestalk wandered toward the head while the other eyestalk worked its way toward the lower extremities.

That is one excellent example of Twazil femalehood, he thought. Delicate antennae sprouted from the female's forehead, between the antennae was a lush mane of golden fur that crested the head and followed her spine, ending at the point where backbone and pelvis made contact.

Below the antennae were stalks that held the most gorgeous golden eyes Tweezor had ever seen. Her slender body was covered by delicate copper-colored scales. With

a grasping pseudotentacle extended from the main tentacle trunk, the female beckoned to Tweezor in a provocative manner. Again Tweezor Zwellbrog's antennae quivered in delight, and one great, webbed foot vibrated against the floor. When Tweezor's mate called out from the food preparation area, inquiring as to the cause of all the foot thumping going on, his reply of poor body fluid circulation in the lower leg seemed to quell her curiosity. Quickly, he closed the pages and hid the copy under a potted Zweenerdox.

Zweenerdox were a specise of carnivorous pseudoferns found primarily in the hot, humid jungles of Southern Twa. Feeding Zweenie, as the plant was affectionately called by the children, was one of their few chores; it became quite apparent to Tweezor that this chore had been neglected when the plant sampled his outstretched tentacle. With a rolled copy of *Twazillane Living*, Tweezor popped the offending pseudofern on the rear; if it was not the rear, Tweezor thought it should be. Zweenie recoiled in disgust and whimpered in complaint.

Forgetting the incident with Zweenie and impervious to the sting of the bite, Tweezor again began to dig. It had to be here, he thought; he dug deeper into the pile of Twazil magazines, frantic now.

His triple hearts stopped, there it was: the object of his determined search. Without hesitation he ripped open the outer covering and withdrew the contents. Both eyestalks centered on the heading of the page; a message this important deserved full attention. "YOU MAY ALREADY HAVE WON TWO MILLION TWAZIL CREDITS."

Amid a sea of Twazillane periodicals sat a heartbroken Twazil. In one fleeting moment, Tweezor's dreams of instant riches had been dashed on the rocks of disappointment. With head slumped forward, antennae sagging, and little gurgling noises coming from his abdomen, Tweezor stroked the long fur on his jaw while turning the Twazillane Periodical Dispersal Center order form over repeatedly in his tentacles.

There was always hope in Tweezor's hearts that one day a two million credit slip would arrive in the mail. Dreamers like Tweezor purchase many periodicals; wishing to feel guiltless about entering their contest without buying anything, he would purchase again. He would offer his wife some excuse for needing more publications. Already Tweezor could feel a great need coming on for *Twazillane Consumer Dynamics*, *Twa World Report*, and maybe even *Twazillane Botanical Digest*. Tweezor momentarily eyed the Zweenerdox pseudofern; the latter choice might come in handy, he thought, the next time that darn plant tried to make a meal out of him.

Tweezor raised his head upon hearing the approach of

webbed feet slapping across the tile floor. Standing over him, tentacles crossed and tapping one webbed foot on the floor tiles, was Tellidor Zwellbrog, his mate. She first eyed the disheveled pile of publications, then Tweezor.

"Just look at the mess you've made."

"Yes, dear," he answered.

"Tweezor, what am I to do with you? No wonder we have trouble making ends meet. Between your subscriptions to every magazine on Twa and your laboratory in sublevel one, it's a miracle we have food to put on the table. Mother warned me about marrying a Twazil whose antennae were in the clouds."

"Yes, dear."

"You do intend to clean up this mess, don't you?"

"I thought there might be time for me to do some work in the lab before evening meal."

"That's just like you, Tweezor Zwellbrog. Leave a mess for me to put away, and you spend the rest of the night in

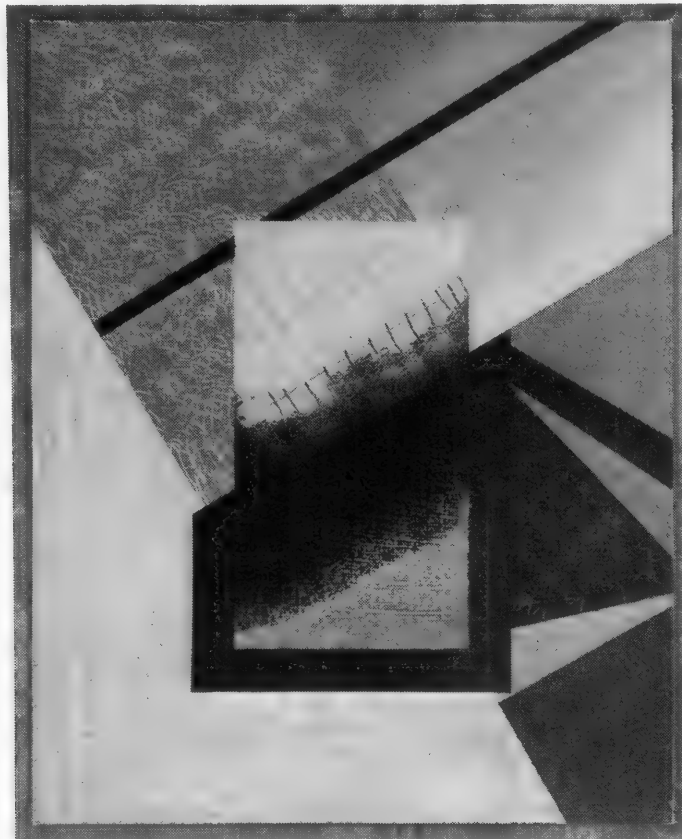
sublevel one playing with your machines. You spend more time with that computer than you do with me."

"I'll get this cleaned up."

"Well, don't take too long; I've a nice fungoid salad growing in the incubator."

"Yes, dear," he said, his mate turned and stomped back toward the food preparation area. Tweezor looked around him at the disarray of Twazil periodicals and spotted the torn envelope of the Twazillane Periodical Dispersal Center. A sigh escaped his throat.

Tweezor rose to his feet and headed toward the gravity lift that would lower him to his laboratory on sublevel one of his living quarters. As he passed the children's room, Tweezor noticed a new sign posted on their door; the sign read "UP THE UNIVERSE." Tweezor guessed the sign had been put there by the older of the pair; he wondered where the youngster was picking up such deviant behavior. Tweezor rapped his tentacle against the doorway frame.



"Nobody's home," yelled the oldest.

"Whooooooooo is it?" asked the youngest.

"It's your father. Your mother wants you to clean up the mess in the family living area."

"Right now?" they asked in unison.

"Right now. You know how your mother is when she gets mad. I wouldn't want to be in your scales if you don't get that mess cleaned up by evening meal."

"Yes, sir," answered the youngest.

"You got it, Dad," answered the oldest.

Tweezor continued his way to the gravity lift. He chortled in delight, satisfied with the knowledge that he could still bluff someone in this household.

As Tweezor neared the gravity lift, he could hear the children arguing in the family living area.

"Mom wants you to clean up this mess," said the oldest.

"Dad said," the youngest started, but was interrupted.

"Dad said Mom wants you to clean up this mess by evening meal."

"But..."

"I wouldn't want to be in your scales if you don't get it done."

"But..."

"You better get to work now, or I'll call Mom."

"Oh, all right." The flag of surrender had been hoisted. "It's not fair," mumbled the youngest. "I didn't make the mess." Tweezor had known what the outcome of the children's parrying would be; like they say, "Organic waste products gravitate to the lowest level."

He stepped into the open well of the lift and descended slowly to sublevel one. Antigravity generators adjusted his weight to a fraction of normal, allowing him just enough weight to be neutrally buoyant.

It was rumored that soon there would be a much less costly version of the personal teleportation device that would make the gravity lift obsolete. With the new teleportation doorways you could just step instantly between levels. Tweezor thought this a great idea and wished it were his project, but Multidimensional Communications and Teleportation Corporation had assigned him to deep space communications.

Tweezor stepped from the gravity lift into his laboratory. Sensors monitoring his entrance automatically adjusted lighting and climate control to his personal preference. His computer, sensing the presence of its user, began opening files and returning the system to where Tweezor's work had been terminated the night before.

Much of Tweezor's equipment belonged to Multidimensional Communication and Teleportation Corporation. The firm granted him use at home, enabling Tweezor to link with the company's more powerful

machines and allowing him to continue his company projects in a less stressful atmosphere.

This arrangement suited Tweezor; in his spare time he could work on personal projects with the backing of the firm's computers and their huge data banks. This suited Multidimensional Communication and Teleportation Corporation; Tweezor was an employee of high intelligence, and the firm knew if Tweezor did come up with some outstanding breakthrough in his field, there would be tremendous monetary fallout in their favor.

Tweezor pulled up a chair and sat in front of the computer work station. Piles of data sheets and system schematics covered the console. Tweezor shoved the heap of print-outs aside, many falling to the floor where they probably would stay, in an effort to gain access to the data entry panel. After running preliminary diagnostics on the system, he felt ready to begin.

"Computer?"

"Yes?"

"Interface with Dimensional Computing Section, main annex, corporate terminal Twazillane."

"Interface requires class Zed three clearance. Tongue scan identification required."

"Computer?"

"Yes?"

"Computer, who am I?"

"Voice print analysis indicates you are Tweezor Zwellbrog, management grade level four, and currently assigned to research and development on deep space communications."

"Do I possess Zed three clearance?"

"Yes."

"Then why must I run a tongue scan?"

"Multidimensional Communication and Teleportation Corporation operation manuals specify under paragraph four thousand thirty-six, article seven, subparagraph forty-six, all employees wishing to gain..."

"Stop."

"Aborted."

"I hate this part."

Tweezor leaned forward and flicked out his long greenish tongue. Splat! The tongue wetly came in contact with the screen and began to tingle as the sensors checked the taste bud patterns against those in Tweezor Zwellbrog's security file.

The scan ended, and Tweezor sputtered and fumed as he spat small dirtballs. "Next time I do that, remind me to wipe the dust off the screen."

"Filing for future reference."

"No! Delete that file: some Twazil at Corporate might see that, and I'd be the laughing stock of the company."

"File erased."

"Can we continue now?"

"Interface complete."

"Run program Zwellbrog six."

"Running."

"Calculate probability of successfully opening rift in timespace continuum stellar coordinates four seven eight point six one."

"Ninety-six percent probability of success."

"Generate rift."

"Warning! Program aborted. Experimentation chamber air lock door not sealed. Opening rift in space-time continuum at this time will cause rapid decompression of Twa's atmospheric envelope, leading to a possible fatal error."

Tweezor looked across the room to the zero atmosphere chamber and saw that the airlock door was ajar.

"Computer?"

"Yes?"

"Seal the chamber door, please."

"Complying."

Machinery whirled and air hissed from the chamber as the door sealed tightly. The computer was right. Opening a rift in the airless void of intergalactic space would have been a disaster had the chamber door been open. Tweezor cringed at the thought of being sucked through a hole in space and having his dead body orbit some uncharted star for eternity.

"Door seal in place. Systems ready for test."

Across the laboratory a bell softly chimed, and Tweezor rose from his chair. He walked rapidly to the wall where the door opened into the well of the gravity lift. Next to the doorway was the screen of an intercom. With a tentacle tip, Tweezor tapped the reply sensor and said, "Yes."

"In case you're interested, evening meal is nearly ready, and the family is hopeful that you might grace us with your presence." As Telli spoke, Tweezor could almost see the frost forming on the face of the intercom.

"Yes, dear. I'll be up in a few moments. Thank you for calling." Tweezor did not understand why Telli did had been so irritable of late. He tapped the intercom and closed the circuit. "Females. It's a lot easier understanding dimensional warp theory."

Tweezor ambled back to the monitor.

"Computer, be thankful that you're a machine. Run program."

"Complying."

Again machinery began to whirl and hum as tremendous physical forces were applied to the fabric of space within the chamber. Tweezor could feel the fur on his face tingle but knew that this was only a mental phenomenon of anticipation; he was well shielded from the forces that tore apart and then rebuilt a small section of the cosmos.

"Rift complete," reported the computer.

"Status?"

"Rift holding stable at this time."

Crossing the room, he stood outside the zero atmosphere chamber. With eager, golden eyes Tweezor peered into the inner depths of the vault. Floating in the center of the chamber, a black shapeless form hung suspended and undulating in mid air. The inside of the amorphous black mass was sprinkled with many pinpoints of sparkling white light, each dollop of light marking the location of the blazing nuclear furnace of a living star. Momentarily, Tweezor felt as if he were an all

powerful deity, looking out upon his creation.

"Begin sensor search of target area."

"Complying."

Time passed slowly as Tweezor, chewing on a tentacle tip, waited for the computer's sensor sweep to finish. Tweezor could only hope that his first try would be a success. If his experiment worked it would be the first time a dimensional rift between two points had been created without a doorway device in the target area. With such a device any point in the universe would become no more distant than one Twazil step.

"Sensor scan complete," reported the computer.

"Well?"

"Sensors indicate rift not in target area."

Tweezor's antennae fell limply to the sides of his head.

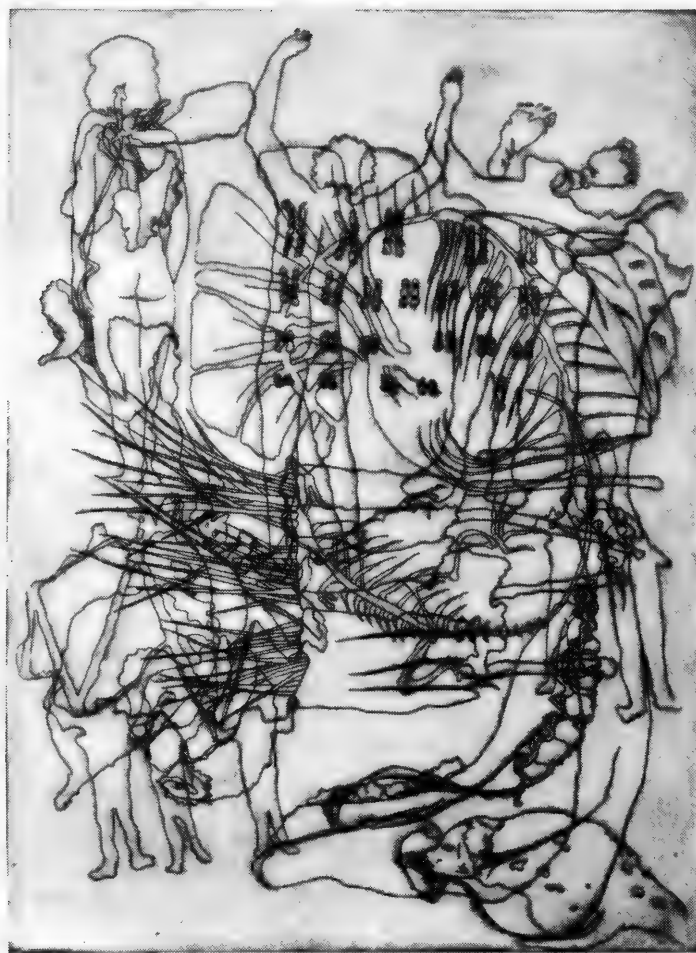
"Where did the rift open?"

"Unknown."

"Speculate."

"Insufficient data for speculation. Solar bodies in area of

*"No intelligent being
could possibly perpetrate
an act of violence against
another; such an act of
aggression would be
totally uncivilized."*



Print by Wendy Cramer

Substance of Life

rift match no known star charts. Possibility exists that rift is not in this dimension."

"Oh well. Anything of interest out there before we close the hole?"

"Sensors picking up strange pattern in background electromagnetic radiation."

"Is EM radiation natural phenomena or Twazil made?"

"No."

"No it is not natural? or no it is not Twazil made? Be more specific in answers."

"Inquiry made as either/or; 'no' satisfies both cases."

"Speculate on origin of EM radiation."

"Signal too weak. Unable to formulate hypothesis at this time."

"Shut down sensors except for EM detectors; boost power to that system."

"Complying."

"Speculate on origin of signal."

"Origin unknown. Signal strength and frequency indicative of primitive communications as used on Twa in pre-colonization period: primarily used in video transmission."

"Computer, boost power to maximum and adjust system to interpret unknown EM frequency."

"Complying."

"Open commercial video channel and display on main monitor."

"Complying."

The monitor buzzed to life and on the screen was the current Twazil President, Jeorz Shrub. The president sat behind his desk in the Twazillane Government Center; behind him were the flags of state. He was a very distinguished-looking Twazil with a warm smile; too bad he was a crook, Tweezor thought.

"My fellow Twazillanians. I come here tonight with three very heavy hearts. The state of Twazil is..."

"Cut sound," commanded Tweezor.

"Complying."

President Shrub's lips continued to move, but no sound came forth. That was alright with Tweezor; as far as he was concerned everything that Shrub said was a lie.

"Computer, feed unknown EM signal through main monitor."

"Complying."

President's Shrub's warm smile was replaced by static. A picture was clearly trying to form, and Tweezor strained

his eyestalks trying to comprehend the forms in the flickering screen.

"Computer, try running the signal through the video synthesizer and enhancing."

"Complying."

Those aren't Twazil, he thought. Tweezor stared, mesmerized by the monitor, as the picture slowly began to clear.

A strange Twazinoid creature stood leaning against a long table. On the table was a container from which the being repeatedly poured, into a small crystalline cup, a liquid that it swallowed in rapid gulps. Funny, thought Tweezor, how the creature's face contorted with each swallow, almost as if the liquid caused some great internal pain. He speculated that it must be some form of ritualistic, spiritual cleansing.

Tweezor studied the being's body closely. It was bipedal, like a Twazil, it had one head, like a Twazil, it had fur on its face, not as beautiful as a Twazil's, and it had two eyes minus the Twazil eyestalks. The strangest body parts were the creature's tentacles. Each tentacle was jointed halfway from the shoulder to the tips and jointed again a short distance from the tips. Sprouting from the end of the tentacles were smaller tentacles that were also jointed in several places.

On the being's head rested some form of covering. It had wide brims which Tweezor concluded must be protection for the eyes from solar glare. The covering had no slits to allow the being's antennae freedom of movement; Tweezor winced at the thought of having his sensitive antennae crushed down under such a restrictive head covering. Tweezor thought that only some kind of strict modesty taboo would cause a being to undergo that kind of discomfort.

Entering the room was a new being; it took three short steps and halted. It was much the same as the other and clothed approximately the same way. Tweezor speculated that these beings must be engineers; around their waists each wore an equipment belt. However, the equipment they carried was unrecognizable.

The creature that had entered the room removed a smoking object from its mouth. Tweezor recognized this object from his youth. It was a narcotic stick, and this new being was obviously a drug addict. Both creatures stood for a short time staring at each other. Their mouths began to move, and Tweezor realized they were engaged in conversation. From their body postures he read their discomfort at being in the same room. Tweezor also would have been uncomfortable in the same room with a narcojunkie.

"Computer?"

"Yes?"

"Analyze signal. Possibility of audio reproduction."

"Analyzing," the computer reported; a short time elapsed

and the computer continued, "audio reproduction capable at this time."

Tweezor watched in fascination as the creatures suddenly pulled odd looking pieces of equipment from their utility belts.

"Computer, try sound."

"Complying."

Bang!

"Whooa!"

Crash!

Tweezor's chair catapulted over backwards dumping him on his posterior. Raising himself off the floor high enough for his eyestalks to view the monitor, Tweezor watched as one being clutched its thorax and fell backward through what he judged to be a silicon-based view port. Tweezor jumped to his feet shouting, "Telli, Telli come quick!" and ran toward the gravity lift.

Up the gravity lift he flew, crashing headfirst into the top of the well; then he bolted down the hall, across the living area, and into the food preparation area. But Telli was not to be found.

"Telli! Telli!" he cried.

"Tweezor, settle down," she said.

Tweezor spun around and found his mate walking toward him, carrying a tentacle load of Twazil periodicals. "You know," she continued, "getting the children to clean up your mess was a dirty trick. I am ashamed of you, dear." She put the magazines down and crossed to the incubator, where her fungoid salad was growing. She opened the door to the incubator and removed the tray of tasty pseudofungus treats.

"Listen to me, Telli!" Tweezor grabbed his mate's tentacle and yanked her toward the door. The tray of freshly grown pseudofungi flew from her grasp and covered the tile floor with bits and pieces of what was to have been the evening meal. "Telli! My laboratory! Quick!" he stammered.

"Tweezor, let go of me!"

Tweezor dragged his mate to the gravity lift, pushed her in, and together they descended to sublevel one.

"Tweezor, what is wrong? Have you totally lost your mind? I've never seen you so excited. Your antennae are vibrating as if a six-legged Zimbet had run up your trousers."

"Look at the screen," he stammered.

Tellidor looked. "All right. So what? All I see is President Shrub; probably lying through his teeth again. I don't really see that it's enough to get so excited over."

"And to conclude, my fellow Twazillanians..."

"They're gone."

"No matter what the press might say of this great political party..."

"Who are gone, dear?"

"We have faithfully looked after the state of Twa..."

"The beings on the monitor."

"And furthermore my fellow Twazillanians..."

"I don't see anyone but Shrub, dear."

"In the future of Twa..."

"Computer, sound off."

"Complying."

"Computer, tell Mrs. Zwellbrog what has occurred."

"Time reference."

"Before I left the lab."

"My sensors recorded Mr. Zwellbrog rapidly adjusting his center of gravity just before his body impacted with the lower surface of his room."

"No, no. Before that."

"My records show Mr. Zwellbrog's body at rest in the console chair."

"What about the beings?"

"That's what I would like to know," added Tellidor Zwellbrog.

"The ones on the monitor."

"Unable to comply. Programming for this experiment does not include recording low-level electromagnetic radiation. I have no record of beings in primary storage."

"I'm worried about you, dear. Maybe tomorrow you should see a Psychotech. Now, since evening meal is ruined, why don't you get cleaned up, and we will go out to eat."

"Telli, listen to me. I opened a rift in the space-time continuum, although it didn't open where I had planned. The computer's sensor array picked up some unknown electromagnetic radiation emissions. I fed these through a video synthesizer, and there they were: alien beings on the monitor. Telli, do you realize how important this is?"

"Tweezor, don't be ridiculous. The Twazil have colonized over three-hundred solar systems. We have been in space for thousands of time periods and never have we come across any alien life forms. They don't exist; there are no other beings...only Twazil."

"Telli, by the seven moons of Twa I swear they were there."

"Then where are they now?"

"Computer, reestablish link with unknown EM transmissions."

"Unable to comply."

"Cause?"

"Fluctuations in main power grid caused loss of rift integrity."

"Can rift be reestablished in same stellar location?"

"Probability infinitesimal."

"Tweezor, for our sake, please don't mention alien beings again."

"Telli, I saw them. One of the beings injured the other with some form of equipment that spouted fire and smoke. The sound it made scared me, and I fell to the floor."

"Tweezor, listen to what you are saying. No intelligent being could possibly perpetrate an act of violence against another; such an act of aggression would be totally uncivilized. You fell asleep at the console and had a bad dream."

Tellidor Zwellbrog embraced Tweezor within her tentacles and continued. "What you need is a long rest. You've worked much too hard on this project."

"Telli, you think I dreamed this?"

"Yes, Tweezor...I do. You have always been a dreamer. I guess that's what attracted me to you: you always had the ability to look at something and see a thousand possibilities for change. Look at this project; you dreamed that the fabric of space could be split with only a door generator at the origin point, and you've done it. Your dreams led to a feat that no other Twazil might have accomplished. I would say that makes you a great success."

"I guess you're right. Besides, without proof, who would believe my story of aliens?"

"Sssh," Telli softly hissed as she placed a tentacle tip over Tweezor's lips. "No more talk of alien beings. Would you rather go down in history as a 'Great Inventor' or be remembered for all time as 'Tweezor the Crackpot'?"

"But, Telli..."

Tweezor started to respond and then fell suddenly silent. What his mate had said was slowly beginning to sink in. Tweezor had accomplished a tremendous feat. This would mean a vice presidency at Multidimensional Communication and Teleportation and financial rewards. Royalties. Licensing fees. "Great Inventor," that is what Tellidor called him. Yes, sir, "Great Inventor." Tweezor's antennae stood erect, and he no longer seemed to slump.

"You're right." Gently he kissed her tentacle tip, then continued. "Telli, I thought your mother warned you against marrying a Twazil whose antennae were always in the clouds."

"She did," Telli answered, looking up at Tweezor with her beautiful golden eyes. "But Daddy always told me, 'A Twazil who never looks beyond his next footstep goes through life bumping into a lot of walls.'"

"Telli, I love you."

"I love you, Tweezor. Now, let's take the children and go out for evening meal."

Tweezor began picking up data sheets and system configuration charts, and neatly stacked them on the work console. "First," he said, "I must clean up this mess."

"Leave it for tomorrow, Tweezor," Telli said, taking his tentacle in hers; together they walked toward the doorway.



The Kiss

Drawing by Jennifer McKinney

Sweetness and Light

Linda Pinkham

Sweetness was locked in his room every night by his Papa because of past troubles. These troubles always seemed to happen at night while everyone but Sweetness slept. He actually went to sleep every night when Papa clicked that lock into place, but he only slept for a few hours. The crushing stillness of the house would press him awake and he would jimmy the window and slip out into his favorite world: he dark, secret time, night.

He loved to run through the fields, especially on a night like tonight. There was the blessing of a light breeze against his face; a pale moon shed just enough light to allow him to find his way without falling. He used to fall a lot, but his feet seemed to know where to put themselves down now. The woods were a secret place of deep shadows and stabbing silver swords of light filtering through the pines and hardwoods. Sweetness liked the extra damp night smell of the woods. He liked to stand in a shadow, stock still, then pass his hand through a sword of light. Sometimes he thought he could see through his hand, that he became invisible at night. He could see them, but they couldn't see him.

It baffled him why all the others slept during the finest part of the day: the night. During the day he liked the wildflowers, all those colors, but at night there were thousands of colors you couldn't find during the day. There were dark blacks and light blacks, dark grays and light grays, but his favorites were the blues. Thousands of blues. The blues were magic at night. He liked to find a blue patch in the woods and lie down in it. He would look straight up through the pine needles. Sometimes he pretended he was alone. Really alone. The farm wasn't there. Mama, Papa and Ginny Mae gone. The Wilsons and the Gwaltneys weren't there. Just him, alone with all that blue magic. The blue light would tickle his brain and speak to him in voices he could almost hear. Sometimes it gave him the shivers, but he would lie still and let the blue light whisper its marvelous secrets to him under the cover of the tree shadows.

He ranged at will, running a mile and walking a mile. Sometimes he could feel the blue magic caressing him as he ran. At those times, he would stop suddenly. The blue shadows would speak. He could hear them, but he couldn't quite make out the words. He just knew they made him feel special. He knew intuitively that the blue light spoke only to him. He ran chuckling through the darkness.

Sometimes his throat constricted with fear when he thought about what Mama would do if she found out. She would tell Papa. Then Papa would take him behind the barn and beat him again across his bare buttocks with that board. Last time Papa had beat him so hard he had not

only had red streaks but blue bruises the next day. Papa swore at him in biblical hate. He bellowed and raged, "God will punish you. He will strike you down. You will burn eternally in damnation forever in God's sweet wrath. Jesus can't love you if you're in hell..." He had tried to get away but Papa was strong. Sweetness hadn't meant to kill the kitten. He couldn't just sit there and let the cat scratch him all over. Besides, how was he to know that you could only hug a small cat so hard and no harder.

After Papa beat him, Mama put alcohol on his cuts. She cried and prayed and begged him not to send himself to hell by breaking God's laws. He promised her, sobbing, that he would never do anything wrong again. And he didn't. For almost a week.

The only thing that continually prayed on his mind was what Mama said. "God sees you. No matter where you are, God sees you."

He looked quickly now out in the shadowy woods, "God, are you there?" God was the slickest person. Mama said he was everywhere, but Sweetness had never seen him. At least, as far as he knew, he hadn't seen him. He hadn't met any strangers in years. He wiped his grubby hands down the front of his jeans all the while looking around for God. He felt creepy, like God was standing behind him, and each time he turned around, God hid. Why would he hide? Sweetness shuffled toward home trying to assume an air of nonchalance. He detoured by the creek to wash up, but he kept a sharp eye out for God.

He was a strange, but talented boy. His strangeness was inexorably tied to his father's past, and that of his father before him. His talent was inescapable. It rested now, silently waiting in the darkness encased in the blue light.

Later that night he slipped back into the house through his bedroom window. He laughed under the sheets. They hadn't missed him. They would never know.

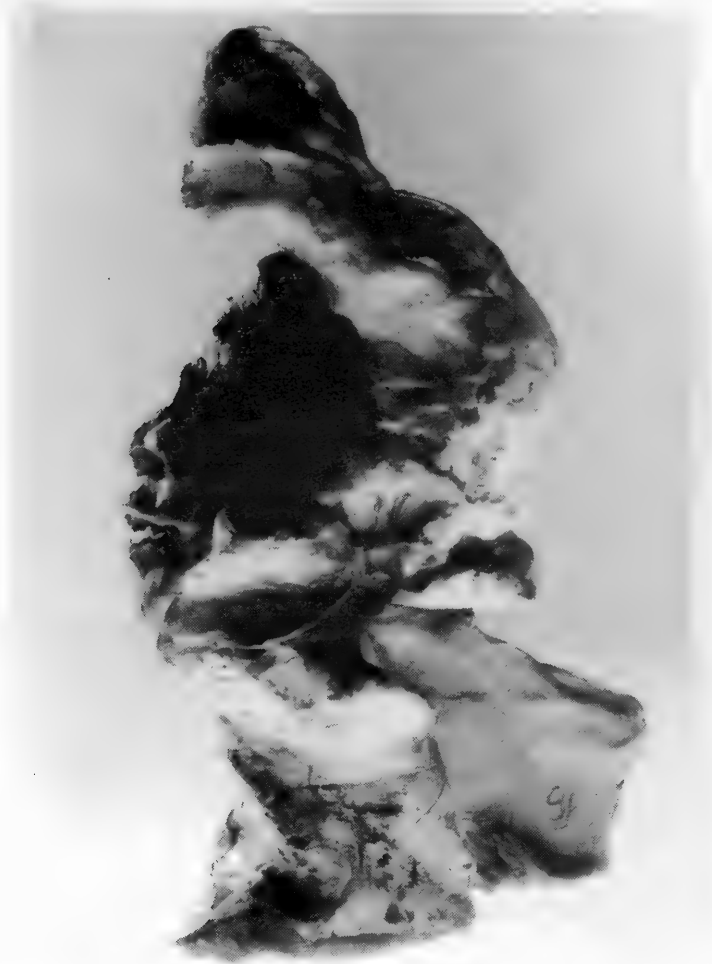
All We Need Is Love

Peter Williams

Recently in California two young people committed suicide. A boy who was seventeen years old, a girl who was fourteen. When told that they were to no longer see each other, they ran away. They lived in a vacant house, alone, caring about nothing—except each other. A “concerned citizen,” doing the “right thing,” called the police. Showing up promptly, the officers threatened the couple when they refused to leave the lot. Bang...Bang...silence. They were both dead.

So many would-be experience, will never be, so many feelings: joy, pain, anger, jealousy, love—gone. Murderers are punished with death. As are innocence, love, and youth. Are adolescents not human? We are loved as children, respected as adults, and ignored as adolescents. Seemingly, we cease to exist through our teenage years. If this continues, many more adolescents will cease to exist. Literally.

“All we need is love.” (John Lennon)



Sculpture by George Am Kincaid

Moving On

PIVOTAL

PIVOTAL

FORCES

FORCES

Two Dollars

Michael Udel

Would that I should not now find
An element so unnatural to my mind
A shape for which I have no love
These coins now resting in my glove.

For what token, I wish to know
Might ever hope to touch my soul
Might repay me with a heavenly caress
That purely mortal realm of happiness.

So have these coins trespassed upon my smile
That I call their feel completely vile
To the winds I cast them for redemption
May some other fool be cursed in their pretension.



Sculpture by Jim Roberson

On Voices of Dissent

Kay Mizell

Democracy equals justice for all; but does it? Are all people treated fairly at all times? If not, should the offended speak out? The issue is whether or not the individual has the right, or indeed the obligation, to question society.

I intend to convince you that although rules are essential to maintain order, the voice of dissent must be acknowledged. Whether the antagonist can heighten public awareness regarding alternatives in an issue, force change in obviously unjust situations, or expose covert wrongdoing, he has a right to be heard. Using several examples, I will show that an open mind and respect for criticism are the pathways to improvement on both public and personal levels.

People are multifaceted, but the majority want to be just. Must the laws always be complied with, or should they be tested? After all, they are compiled by the democratically elected representatives of the people. I would further define "laws," as there are two sets: one public, one private. The populace are told the difference between right and wrong concerning the former. The latter, which can and do produce intense emotional conflict, are often less tangible. When dealing with these we are, it is hoped, guided by our integrity. After all, no one can run from himself. I feel that if he has the courage of his convictions, the individual should follow the dictates of his conscience. If society can be magnanimous enough to listen, evaluate, and even amend its legislative errors when necessary, it will indeed be as tolerant as it wishes to appear.

However, the prudent are aware that it can be unwise to question the system. In *"The Prince"* Machiavelli writes, "...anyone who abandons what is done for what ought to be done learns his ruin rather than his preservation..." Therefore, if the critic plans to speak out, the reasoning must be sound.

The contender may make his point in two ways. He can either break the law or work within it. This choice is, of course difficult, and dependent on character and circumstances. Generally, people who stay within the law gain more approval and support. However, someone who has tried all legal channels and achieved nothing must understandably attempt to justify illegal action. He could cite frustration and the dictates of his conscience. If the law breaking was a last desperate demonstration of the sincerity of the individual, much public sympathy could be gained. Nevertheless, the perpetrator must be prepared to pay the penalty for his transgression, however pure his motives.

Of course, it may be said by many that there is no acceptable excuse for defying the law. A leading proponent of this belief was Socrates. In Plato's *"Crito,"* Socrates has been condemned to death for encouraging

critical thinking in the young people of Athens. He nobly accepts his fate. He now reasons that if the individual questions the law, anarchy will ensue, and society will disintegrate. He believes the judgment must be enacted, though many believe it to be morally wrong. His friend tries to persuade him to escape, others are willing to help. Socrates sits in his cell and justifies his decision to stay; and die. His unswerving belief in the integrity of the system convinces Crito that Socrates is correct. In spite of his devastating logic, it might seem paradoxical that someone so committed to the establishment would advocate critique of it. Should he not have considered that other innocent people may die because no one dares question the system? Questioning the system and appealing a decision do not necessarily result in the crumbling of law and order but create the possibility for improvement of it.

A superb illustration of soundly reasoned defiance of the law is Martin Luther King's illegal, peaceful demonstration in Birmingham, Alabama, in 1963. In a perfectly balanced society, such as Thomas Moore's *"Utopia,"* there would be no such recalcitrance. Sadly, on planet Earth, the structure is often unbalanced. One such imbalance culminated in the birth of the Civil Rights movement in America, and King's imprisonment for demonstrating without a permit. King felt justified in breaking what he saw as an unjust law to protest other unjust laws. In his extremely powerful reply to a letter he received from a group of local clerics, he admonished them for advocating patience. This response is a classic example of the actions of the oppressed individual when he has realized that following the rules of the oppressor is futile.

Until a system based on *"Utopia"* can be established, many will continue to suffer the consequences of greed, prejudice, hatred and aggression. This suffering can be alleviated only when the individual's voice is heard.

Organized groups who have spoken out have indeed achieved much. Civil disobedience usually begins when one committed individual voices the opinion of many, who then rally round. There have been many instances in which discontent has ballooned into rebellion. The War of Independence freed Americans from what they considered to be unjust British rule. Women rallied around leaders such as Emily Pankhurst and Susan B. Anthony to gain suffrage. These groups questioned, acted, and won. Without strength of conviction, we might still believe the world to be flat.

Courage, as well as strength of conviction, is vital to those who question authority. The most courageous and charismatic individual is the martyr. Anyone willing to die for his cause will automatically attract a body of like-minded people. There have been countless martyrs

throughout the course of history. The most recent would-be martyr is Nelson Mandela of the African National Congress. This black South African was "detained" for 27 years, quietly, but effectively, showing his contempt for the system. He was undoubtedly aware that if he had been martyred, the black majority in South Africa would probably have exploded like the proverbial powder keg. However, the risks he took in his quiet protest were considerable. He could have been disposed of, mysteriously disappearing, as have others who advocated human rights. His release from "detention" is, in itself, a decisive victory. This is a case in which one strong and determined leader was effective in helping to increase international awareness regarding apartheid in South Africa. Apartheid, however, is not practiced; racism is, and this troublesome black man now receives worldwide recognition as a courageous humanitarian in his leadership in the resistance to racism.

Strength of conviction is also needed to oppose popular opinion. This is illustrated by citizens who cannot condone decisions made by their leaders in time of war. These are the conscientious objectors. No laws are being broken, but a policy of pacifism is being adhered to. They may be called cowards, but might it not take as much, possibly more, strength to stand up and say "no," than to quietly enlist and go to war? I feel it might. Machiavelli states in "The Prince" that "...one will discover that something which appears to be a virtue, if pursued, will end in his destruction; while some other thing which seems to be a vice, if pursued, will result in his safety and his well-being."

This quotation demonstrates the dilemma of the conscientious objector. The virtue of not killing another human being could result in the alienation of his friends and loved ones. The vice of killing will result in their approval. This must generate agonizing inner conflict. He may possibly be understood by some, tolerated by others. However, he risks persecution by those who refuse to even try and understand. In World War II, British publicans and shopkeepers served a white feather with the beer or provisions of someone who chose not to fight. This was a powerful and humiliating statement of public opinion. How does a conscientious objector voice his views and remain totally safe amongst those who rush forward in a mindless euphoria of patriotism to volunteer? It might be more perilous in some ways to object than to go to war and "kill or be killed." The most recent objector was deemed newsworthy because he refused, on grounds of conscience, to fight anyone over fossil fuel; even Iraq. He has been transferred to a noncombat unit in the United States Forces. Is he really a coward, or has he thought the issue through thoroughly?

My final argument involves a recent event in which, again, no laws of the land were broken. It is a disturbing example of the ethics and values of some members of society. In 1986, the space shuttle Challenger exploded 73 seconds after launch. An official inquiry established the direct mechanical cause. In short, a failed seal caused flames to leak and come into contact with the main fuel tank, which

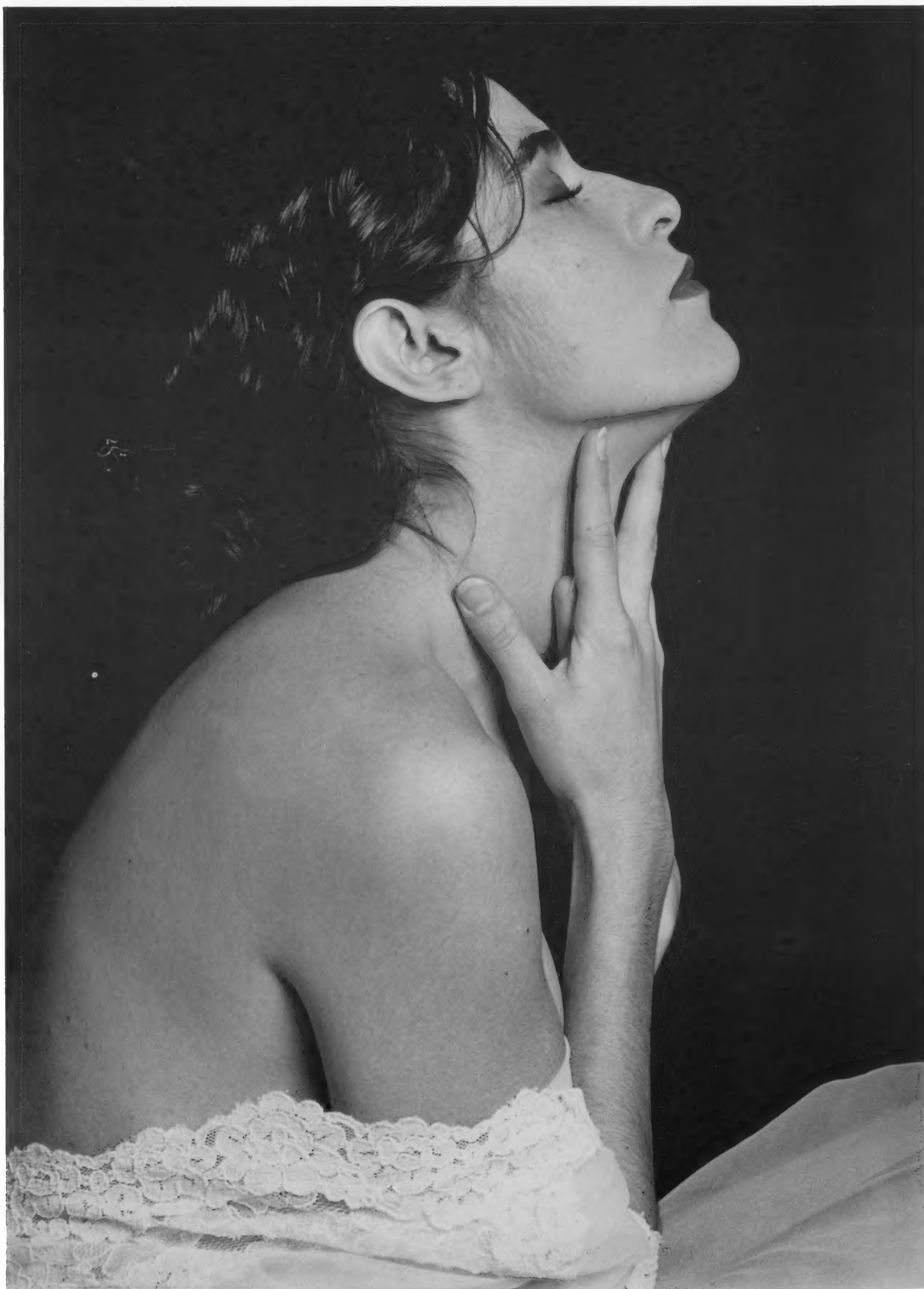
then ignited. This resulted in the deaths of seven intelligent, brave, forward thinking people. Millions of dollars worth of publicly financed space hardware was also destroyed. However, during the inquiry, a small group of engineers employed by the manufacturer of the failed device voluntarily came forward. They exposed a tragic tale of poor management, risk taking, and appalling ethics by the executives of their company, and at NASA. Some officials had been made aware, as early as 1977, that the piece of equipment which failed on the Challenger was not suitable for its intended purpose. No effective adjustments were made. The possibility of finding a replacement part was not investigated because of financial considerations.

What drove these men to "blow the whistle?" They had nothing to gain and risked losing their reputations or even their jobs. It was obviously a moral dilemma. They had "inside information," and felt compelled to make it public to prevent another tragedy. Nothing illegal had been done, but morally they were all guilty. If these men had not come forward, how much of this damaging information would have been made available to the public? We may never know. This much detail was brought to light by the need of these few to purge themselves of a moral burden too heavy for their shoulders. It must be assumed, for the safety of future astronauts, that if these facts had not been exposed the negligent could have repeated their misdemeanors.

On consideration of the evidence, we must agree that dissent is vital. Society must police itself morally as well as legally. The examples used here cover legal and illegal responses based on conscientiously applied values in given situations. These thinkers are entitled to freedom of speech. If no one clashed with authority, it could become depraved. Winston Churchill, quoting a letter penned by Lord Acton in 1887, said "Power corrupts; absolute power corrupts absolutely." It would be unwise to completely forget this sentence.

In conclusion, as "Utopia" is so far removed from reality as to be ludicrous, enlightened criticism must be heard. If the masses allowed themselves to become placed and controlled, as Socrates would wish, they could become mere puppets for those who would gain and possibly abuse power. If all leaders were totally and unselfishly dedicated to public good, and utterly chaste, society would indeed be blessed. Unfortunately, human nature often involves large amounts of weakness and avarice. Therefore, vigilance is required; even towards those of authority. If we do not exercise it, we risk condoning the development of other situations in which Martin Luther King could be justified in condemning,

"...the appalling silence of the good people." (Letter from Birmingham Jail, 1963)



Photograph by Janice Honea

FORCES Spring 1993 43



Photograph by Janice Hirmon

PITHY NOTES

About...

The Student Writers:

Peter Williams uses the simplicity of his words to portray the conflicts between society and the inner person; the love between mother and offspring emerges through the hand of Ron Jackson; Ari Newcomb touches on questions asked by many in the privacy of their minds; Jackie Webb dreams of life's happy endings; Linda Pinkham explores relationships beyond what can be seen; Laura Sue Lindsey joins the worlds of opposites; Michael Udel is fighting the influence of the baby boomers; Scott Huffmaster seizes the originality of each moment; Nick Ryan's gentle force encourages dialogue; Dow Peterson envisions possibilities beyond reality; Steve Tucker brings life to the everyday; Kay Jacobs reaches out through her imagination; Linda Gillispie polishes all the rough edges.

Special contribution: Kay Mizell, English faculty, follows the dictates of her conscience.

The Student Visual Artists:

Julio Suarez is inevitably influenced by the desire to communicate his love of life; Through the lens of her camera, Gina Hill touches the heart; George Ann Kincaid strides toward the future in her clay sculpture; Dena Monsees draws from nature through the medium of clay; Jane Hurst dabbles in the subtlety and grace of art formed in clay; Sandy Freeman captures the simplicity of everyday life; Jim Roberson takes chances by reaching to other worlds; Jennifer McKinney's light touch speaks many words; Wendy Cramer delicately shapes the substance of life; Robert Hemer reflects back on a gentler time; through the eyes of children, Janice Hirmon grasps innocence at play; Elta Chandler defines the ongoing struggle between the sexes; Steve Daniel's "Ascension" is actually the first step in completion of his piece which will be cast in bronze and find its home in a local church.



FORCES
COLLIN COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE
2800 E SPRING CREEK BLVD
PLANO, TEXAS 75074